

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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C O N F I D E N T I A L USNATO 5124

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: NATO, ECON, UR, XH

SUBJECT: ECONADS, WORK PROGRAM--PROPOSED MEETING ON JOINT COMMISSIONS

REF: A. USNATO 4919

B. USNATO 4984

STATE 220635

1. THERE WAS A FURTHER CONFUSING DISCUSSION AT SEPTEMBER 18 ECONADS OF THE PROPOSED OCTOBER MEETING FOR EXCHANGE OF EXPERIENCES ON JOINT COMMISSIONS WITH USSR AND EE STATES. IT WAS EVEN MORE CONFUSED SINCE A SEPTEMBER 15 MEMO BY THE CHAIRMAN ON THE TOPIC HAD NOT REACHED DELEGATIONS BEFORE THE MEETING. TEXT OF THIS MEMO (UNCLASSIFIED) FOLLOWS:BEGIN TEXT

SUBJECT: THE COMMITTEE'S PROGRAMME OF WORK

AT ITS MEETING ON 11TH SEPTEMBER, THE ECONOMIC COMMITTEE SOUGHT FURTHER INFORMATION ON THE REASONS JUSTIFYING AN EXCHANGE OF VIEWS ON THE ACTIVITIES OF THE JOINT COMMISSIONS. IT HAD BEEN SUGGESTED THAT OFFICIALS RESPONSIBLE FOR ECONOMIC AND TRADE RELATIONS WITH THE SOVIET UNION AND THE EAST EUROPEAN COUNTRIES SHOULD TAKE PART IN THIS DISCUSSION.

2. THERE ARE TWO MAIN REASONS WHY SUCH A MEETING WOULD BE CONFIDENTIAL

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USEFUL, AND THEY HAVE OFTEN BEEN REFERRED TO WITHIN THE COMMITTEE:

(A) CERTAIN DELEGATIONS WHICH HAVE NOT YET, OR ONLY RECENTLY, ADOPTED THE JOINT COMMISSION APPROACH WOULD

LIKE TO BENEFIT FROM THE EXPERIENCE OF COUNTRIES WHICH
HAVE BEEN USING IT FOR SOME TIME;

(B) MANY DELEGATIONS WOULD WELCOME A CHANCE TO COMPARE
NOTES WITH A VIEW TO:

- IDENTIFYING THE ECONOMIC, AND POSSIBLY THE
POLITICAL, SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS FORM OF INTER-
NATIONAL INTERCOURSE BOTH FOR THE COMMUNIST
COUNTRIES AND FOR THE ALLIED COUNTRIES;
- DETERMINING TO WHAT EXTENT THESE COMMISSIONS CAN
BE INSTRUMENTAL IN STRENGTHENING ECONOMIC,
TECHNICAL AND TRADE LINKS BETWEEN EAST AND WEST,
ESPECIALLY IN THE LIGHT OF THE HELSINKI AGREEMENTS;
- COMPILING INFORMATION ON THE SHORT AND MEDIUM-TERM
OUTLOOK FOR EAST-WEST TRADE, HOW IT CAN BE EXPANDED
AND THE OBSTACLES IN THE WAY OF SUCH EXPANSION.

3. THE COMMITTEE ITSELF MUST DECIDE THE BEST WAY OF
ARRANGING THIS MEETING AND MEMBERS ARE, OF COURSE, FREE TO
DEVELOP THE ABOVE DISCUSSION OUTLINE.

END TEXT

2. FOLLOWING POSITIONS REPORTED REF (B), DANISH, CANADIAN,
GERMAN, AND ITALIAN ECONADS CONFIRMED THEIR AGREEMENT WITH
THE BELGIAN SUGGESTION AT SEPTEMBER 4 MEETING. SEVERAL,
INCLUDING THE BELGIAN, INDICATED THAT PROPOSED NOVEMBER 13
DATE WAS INCONVENIENT. UK ECONAD SAID THAT WHILE HIS
AUTHORITIES WERE LUKEWARM, TO THE MEETING, THEY WOULD PARTICI-
PATE WITH EXPERTS. US ECONAD MADE STATEMENT PER PARA 4,
REF (C).

3. FRENCH ECONAD RECALLED HIS AUTHORITIES VIEWS EXPRESSED
IN PREVIOUS MEETINGS, BUT SAID THEY DID NOT WISH TO FRUSTRATE
INTEREST OF THE COMMITTEE IN JOINT COMMISSION ACTIVITY ON A
GENERAL PLANE. THEY SUGGESTED, THEREFORE, THAT PRIOR TO ANY
MEETING OF EXPERTS FROM CAPITALS, THE DESIRES OF MANY
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MEMBERS MIGHT BE SERVED BY A SUBMISSION, BY EACH, OF BASIC
INFORMATION ON THE HISTORY, FUNCTIONS, COMPOSITION, ETC., OF
JOINT COMMISSIONS WITH CEMA COUNTRIES, WHILE AVOIDING
SENSITIVE DETAILS OF CREDIT OR COMMERCIAL NEGOTIATIONS.
COMMENT: WHILE THERE WAS NO DISCUSSION OF THE FRENCH
COUNTERPROPOSAL, IT APPEARS TO US THAT THIS WOULD BE A USEFUL
EXERCISE FROM WHICH WE MIGHT BENEFIT.

4. FRENCH ECONAD ALSO NOTED THAT IT MIGHT BE MORE USEFUL
FOR THE COMMITTEE TO HAVE CONSULTATIONS INSTEAD OF ACTIVITIES
IN THE ECE, ESPECIALLY IN THE LIGHT OF ITS ROLE IN IMPLEMENTA-
TION PARTS OF CSCE BASKET II. SEPTEL FOLLOWS ON THIS ASPECT
WHICH WILL TAKE ACCOUNT OF STATE 219808 AND, NAC SEPT 18

DISCUSSION OF CSCE FOLLOW-UP.

5. ACTION REQUESTED: FURTHER GUIDANCE IN LIGHT OF PARAS 1-3, ABOVE.
BRUCE

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